St. Charles Seminary
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Mid-Term Education Issue

THE

Commonweal

FREEDOM TO TEACH

by Helen C. White

THE WORK OF UNESCO

by Jerome D'Souza

FAILURE OF AN ELITE

by J. L. Benvenisti

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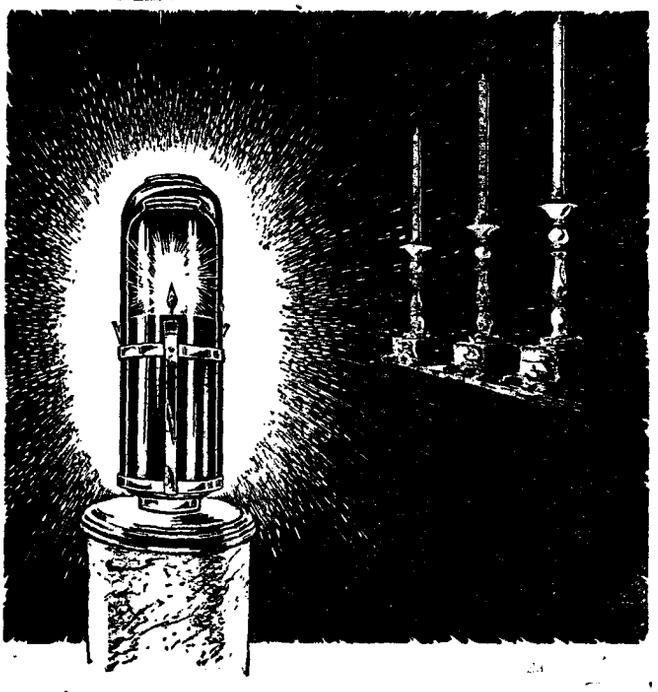

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Editor
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
PHILIP SCHARPER

Contributing Editors
PHILIP BURNHAM
JOHN C. CORT
ANNE FREMANTLE
PHILIP T. HARTUNG
RICHARD HAYES

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

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The
Commonweal
week by week

THE NECESSARY ART OF MR. DULLES

SECRETARY of State Dulles has, once again, coined several phrases which are being tossed around on the hard political counters of the world. Many of his critics have already attempted to return them for sounder currency.

The present controversy centers on James Shepley's article in a recent issue of *Life* in which Mr. Dulles is quoted as saying "You must take chances for peace, just as you must take chances in war. . . . The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art. If you cannot master it you inevitably get into war. If you try to run away from it, if you are scared to go to the brink, you are lost. We've had to look it square in the face—on the question of enlarging the Korean war, on the question of getting into the Indochina war, on the question of Formosa."

In his account of the chances taken during these three crises, Mr. Shepley, whom Mr. Dulles found no need to correct, stated as fact two points that were almost immediately challenged. The first of these set on edge most of the British newspapers which lashed out at Mr. Dulles for reporting that the British had a change of heart about agreeing to joint intervention in Indochina. There never was, the papers said, the "specific agreement" between Messrs. Dulles, Churchill and Eden that the article refers to.

The second major attack on supposed fact was launched at home when Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota said that Mr. Dulles' recommendations concerning the Formosa conflict had been overruled by President Eisenhower. Furthermore, the Senator said, the account that Mr. Dulles presented to the Foreign Relations Committee was contrary to the views attributed to him by the article. The secret testimony given by the Secretary of State should be made public, he said, unless the serious "distortion of history" were corrected.

But beyond these disputed "facts," the storm raged about the casual way in which the article was released, and the manner in which Mr. Dulles expressed himself. For much of the shock and indignation aroused in this country was directed at a policy that the critics had encountered before, a policy that Mr. Dulles had developed at length in previous statements. When in the past he was brought to task for using the phrase "massive retaliation," he explained the policy of deterrents.

In terms less controversial than those he used, a policy of deterrents depends upon maintaining a military strength sufficiently great that we can not be forced into appeasement. And we assure potential enemies that we can be forced into using the power at our command. All this has been said before, and has always been open to discussion. Nor is it hopelessly in conflict with President Eisenhower's statement that we must "wage peace" from a strong defensive position.

THE STORM does not therefore result from the sudden and dramatic unveiling of a policy which was previously hidden from all but the designers. It results, in large part, from Mr. Dulles' almost inimitable timing and sense of phrasing. If one granted Mr. Dulles the achievements claimed in the Shepley article—as only his staunchest supporters would—what did he expect to gain from his present statement? He must have known that the disputed "facts" would be the basis for strong argument and hostile criticism, and that his claims would arouse allies and foes alike.

The British are naturally aroused at what they interpret as an unfriendly attack on Prime Minister Eden at a critical time. Our other allies, however they may profit from our position of strength, do not relish the idea of seeing another country ready to commit them to a devastating world conflict. Neutral countries may find it easier to turn a jaundiced eye upon our sincere efforts for peace and prosperity abroad when we "take chances" on war. And countries hostile to us scarcely have to cut and measure the report for their requirements. It is made to order for them. And this

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is due, it must be stressed, to the disheartening appearance Mr. Dulles has given to his policy.

It is unfortunately true that the article, rather than pointing to areas of our foreign policy where true differences of opinion exist between Democrat and Republican, lends itself to easy distortion and useless bitter dispute. Some Democrats have already committed themselves to rash and foolish charges.

There can be no doubt that Mr. Dulles will again be asked to clarify his statements. If he is to do so successfully, he must change the role he has conjured up as a gambler with the world's destiny to that of sober diplomat. And, to paraphrase his article, he must remember that the ability to explain policy without arousing unnecessary antagonism is the necessary art. If you cannot master it, you inevitably get into serious trouble.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS

ONE PRICE we pay for our form of government from time to time is the impulsion to make things palatable to the great bulk of the voting public at all costs—especially in an election year. Measures which are far-seeing and statesmanlike often fail of adoption for fear of alienating votes. On certain vital issues matters are taken in hand by skillful demagogues.

The latest political reactions to President Eisenhower's proposal of long-term commitments of foreign aid provide a sorry example. Both parties are involved. Senator George, Democratic leader and greatly respected chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, surprised many of his admirers by suggesting that it would be unwise to push the long-term commitments plan at the expense of bi-partisanship on foreign policy. He also asserted that it is up to Congress to decide on the amount and destination of foreign aid commitments year by year. Accounts of his remarks failed to stress that in his own state Mr. George is fighting for his political life against an opponent who charges him with "internationalism." But whatever the extenuation, the Senator's expressed views have had a chilling effect.

The Republicans, for their part, appear ready to abandon the idea except for a few pious phrases. Ironically enough, the urgency for expanded commitments stems from the economizing on foreign aid under Administration auspices. When Soviet inroads in the Middle East and elsewhere disclosed American weaknesses, extra sums were clearly seen to be required. Senator Knowland could have been expected to oppose this turn of things, and the expanding of foreign outlays for whatever purpose goes counter to the proverbial Republican urge to economize. Without strong support in either party Mr. Eisenhower's long-term commitment plan has but the slimmest prospects.

It is true that on a number of foreign projects the United States has supplied assistance that has gone on for several years without long-term commitments; somehow or other the necessary appropriations each year have come through. But a five- or ten-year commitment to another country does provide a sense of assurance and continuity that greatly enhances a program's value as far as American foreign relations are concerned.

One of the greatest obstacles the United States faces is the fear of other countries that we are utilizing them simply as defenses against the Communist advance. Few peoples actually feel that we are genuinely interested in their economic development and a general advancement *per se*. Much would be gained if these peoples would even come to sense that our concept of free-world defense involves the development of a number of strong and independent foreign bastions. Yet nothing would prove more convincing of American concern for the prosperity of other peoples for its own sake than long-term commitments which would not vacillate with each twist and turn in the world-wide cold war.

NEXT WEEK

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN gives some personal impressions of his first visit to the United States.

"My first impressions of the skyscrapers in New York were a definite anti-climax. Like the pyramids and the Sphinx in Egypt they are over-publicized and take fantastic proportions in the minds of people who have never seen them. . . . There is something which is immediately refreshing in America, and that is the general open friendliness which has nothing to do with the indifference of the New Yorker. . . . The very absence of traditions is in my view one of the secrets of the friendly freshness in the American approach, of its boldness and its faith and, in the end, of its humility, which is the first prerequisite for greatness."

THE CASE OF MR. KUTCHER

THE PLIGHT of James Kutcher, a veteran who lost both legs in World War II, has aroused considerable public interest in recent weeks. Many people have had a brush with national security

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regulations, but Mr. Kutcher ran afoul of them in three separate fields. For this reason alone, if for no other, his case would have attracted more than passing interest. But beyond this fact his experiences seem to us to point up in a unique way what the concept of national security should involve and what it should not.

Mr. Kutcher is a member of the Socialist Workers Party, which is today anti-Khrushchev, just as it was in Stalin's time anti-Stalinist, but which is, nonetheless, a genuine Marxist-Leninist political organization listed as subversive by the Attorney-General. As a result of his political affiliations, Mr. Kutcher lost his government job with the Veterans Administration, had his pension stopped, and was threatened with eviction from the public housing development in which he and his parents live.

When Mr. Kutcher lost his government job, no one paid much attention, but when his pension was stopped newspaper coverage, sparked by the New York *Post,* began. Under the spotlight of publicity, the VA abandoned its original plans for a secret session on the question of Mr. Kutcher's pension and instead held open hearings. According to law, disability pensions can be cut off if satisfactory evidence is presented that the veteran in question is guilty of "mutiny, treason, sabotage or rendering assistance to an enemy of the United States." Eventually, the specific charges against Mr. Kutcher came down to the claim that he had made statements which "rendered assistance" to the North Koreans. At the end of the hearings, the VA decided to restore Mr. Kutcher's pension, on the grounds that such statements by him had not been proved beyond a reasonable doubt.

Here, we think, the VA was in error—not for restoring Mr. Kutcher's pension but in the grounds on which they took their action. The whole idea that remarks made in conversation, however extreme politically, constitute "rendering assistance" to the enemy so as to merit forfeiture of a disability pension seems to us nonsense. Mr. Kutcher's political views are a long way from ours, but he or any other disabled veteran should not be subject to the fear of losing a pension on such flimsy grounds. In general, it seems to us, the same principle should apply to pension cases like this one and to the question of the type of discharge to be given to a soldier with left-wing political ties. In the latter instance, the military should judge a man for his conduct while in the service; if his political views are not enough to bar him from the draft, they should not later be used as an excuse to give him an other-than-honorable discharge, despite good conduct in the service. In the same way, Mr. Kutcher's political views did not prevent the U.S. from sending him to the war in which he lost his legs, and they should not now be used to deny him his pension. To say otherwise seems to us a gross violation of ordinary common sense and of elemental national decency.

As for the notion of evicting Mr. Kutcher and his parents from their public housing unit because of his politics, again we see no rhyme or reason in it. We simply do not believe in ousting Mr. Kutcher or anyone else from government housing projects on such grounds. The concept of security applies properly to national defense; extending it arbitrarily to areas like public housing projects which in no way involve the national safety makes the whole concept ridiculous.

We would, therefore, support Mr. Kutcher in his efforts to keep his pension and to escape eviction from his home. But he also wants to make the government give him his old job back, and here we would part company with him and his supporters, for government employment involves an essentially different question. Unlike the question of his receiving a disability pension and his continued residence in a public housing project, employment by the government is legitimately in the area of national security. One does not have to take the Attorney General's list completely at face value to presume that in this instance responsible public officials have decided that Mr. Kutcher's political loyalty is to a genuinely revolutionary party, even though it is now minuscule in size—as opposed, say, to various Socialist groups which are dedicated to change but by peaceful means. Under the circumstances, we think the government is well within its rights in denying re-employment to Mr. Kutcher. And in this matter it seems to us that the all-or-nothing group on each side has badly missed the point. For those who would indiscriminately deny Mr. Kutcher pension, housing and government job, as if they were all in the same category, and those who would, equally indiscriminately, fight for all three are guilty of the kind of distortion which makes a rational approach to the problem of security increasingly difficult.

FRIENDSHIP FOR FRANCE

NOW THAT the dust of the French elections has settled, it is evident that the cause of democratic government has been the most serious casualty. Parliamentary democracy in France is now ringed about by forces committed to its destruction, since one-third of the Assembly seats are

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now held by the Communists and the Poujadists, neo-fascists capable only of shouted protests and mumbled programs.

It was to be expected that France's allies, most especially the U.S. and Britain, would register concern at the splintering of the Assembly into four main power blocs as a result of the explosive elections. If, at international tables, France's place will not be marked by "an empty chair," as Winston Churchill once warned, it will probably hold a nervous occupant fidgeting with a negative mandate.

The fear that inertia and immobilism might continue to grip France is, unfortunately, well-founded, and we can understand the official expressions of concern and the journalistic prophecies of gloom which have been recorded both here and in Britain.

But we also feel that France, in her crisis, demands and deserves some other response than the voices of alarm and apprehension. She has the right to hear some expression of faith and confidence in her expressed by the nations which are her oldest and most important allies. Fulminations from these allies will not help France; their friendship might.

Distrust and suspicion among the allies of the West can easily poison the springs of a common effort to achieve a common goal. No one nation has the right to expect that its allies, any more than itself, will have less than a fair share of human weakness, stupidity and self-interest. Each nation, despite what may be a legitimate anxiety about the others, must give the tolerance which it expects for itself.

If, on the other hand, clichés about American greed, British self-interest or French irresponsibility are used again and again to interpret policies or explain events, national stereotypes are set up and the bonds of forced association replace those of international friendship.

It is accepted as political realism that pacts and alliances need constant reaffirmation. The same would seem to be true of the national feelings which are supposedly embodied in such alliances. There could hardly be a better time for the U.S. to reaffirm toward France the friendship of the past and a faith in our common future.

Such a suggestion may well sound, of course, a trifle ingenuous in the hurly-burly of politics, but is, nevertheless, the most realistic course open to the U.S. and Britain.

The West simply cannot cut France loose; she is indispensable to the community of free nations. No matter how much her former prestige may have sagged or her military strength been sapped, she is still a bulwark of freedom in Europe and throughout the world. No matter how deeply the U.S. and Britain may be concerned about the stability and continuity of the French government, they must continue to accept her as an important ally exactly as she is.

In such a situation it is surely better to show France that her allies are sympathetic toward, not simply annoyed by her problems, and to proffer every evidence of friendship that her present crisis demands or that the ingenuity of her allies can discover. The West is not so rich in friends that it can afford to turn away from one who asks only trust and confidence in her ability eventually to resolve her present crisis.

A MATTER OF INTEGRATION

THE DIFFICULTIES that arise when large contingents of men, women and children leave home and a familiar environment to settle in a strange land are acute among the Puerto Ricans who have come to the United States. There are some half million Puerto Ricans in the Archdiocese of New York alone. Many reach these shores with little in the way of material resources or definite prospects for a job or place of shelter. They are confused by many things: an unfamiliar language, the pace and tensions of a huge metropolis and the notorious New Yorkish indifference, which at times verges on hostility in their case.

In order to grasp their social and religious problems—nine-tenths of the people of Puerto Rico are baptized in the Catholic faith—last spring some thirty-five priests from the United States and over twice that number from Puerto Rico conferred on the Spiritual Care of Puerto Rican Migrants. The various papers and ensuing discussions adduced a wealth of information about conditions on the island and the mainland cities where these migrants make their new homes. The participants presented the religious and other obstacles with great candor, along with a wide range of the constructive measures already undertaken by a number of dioceses. One of the key ideas was the full-fledged integration of Puerto Rican families into already existent American city parishes; various efficacious methods were outlined.

These highly informative proceedings are about to be made available in book form containing a prefatory letter by Cardinal Spellman which commends the apostolate to the Spanish-speaking in this country. This report may be obtained at $4.75 a copy from the Coordinator of Spanish Catholic Action, 453 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.

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Freedom to Teach

"AGAINST ALL THE INFILTRATIONS OF FEAR AND SUSPICION, WE STILL KNOW THAT FREEDOM IS THE VERY AIR WE BREATHE"

HELEN C. WHITE

ON FIRST consideration, I would probably have chosen a title like "Academic Freedom," to most people an abstraction of the kind to be expected of my calling; to a few, a red flag to a bull. But the present title is, I think, more pertinent. In spite of all the anxieties of our times, the very word "freedom" is still a trumpet call to the American heart. Against all the infiltrations of fear and suspicion, we still know that freedom is the very air we breathe. Whatever we have done, whatever we have to offer the world for the future is grounded in freedom—is, indeed, possible only to freedom.

In our recent efforts to explain ourselves to the rest of the world, I am not sure that we have always laid the emphasis we might have on the fact that those American achievements that even our enemies would emulate are possible only because more people have been free to discover themselves and develop their gifts and take the initiative in making their distinctive contribution to the life about them in America than anywhere else. And that goes not only for the well-born and the handsome and the gifted, but for the humble and the homely and the modestly endowed.

I suspect that if we could find the right words for this freedom to make the most of oneself and to make one's distinctive contribution to the life of his time, we would have a source of appeal to the rest of the world more potent even than the American standard of living. "There was something about your young men," said a famous German liberal in Frankfurt in 1946, "as they marched in here, tired and dirty as they were, that we all wished we could have for our children." It was that American air, still about the G.I. for all the war indoctrination and the war abrasion. He might call himself General Issue, but every one of those young men had always taken it for granted that he was somebody important and special. This recognition of the common human dignity has exacted its price, of course, but that price is one which anyone who believes that we are all children of a common Father will hardly consider too high, and that most of the underprivileged world, whether or not they have ever heard the Christian teaching of the unique value of every human being, will certainly not find repellent. We should, I think, make more of an effort than we have to date to make sure that this face of the American way of life is seen more often.

FREEDOM, then, is the key word for what we have to say about American education, and free men are what we have in our mind's eye when we talk of the work of the teacher. That is easy to say, so dangerously easy that we should never say anything like that without stopping to remind ourselves of just what we mean. We mean not workmen, skilled or unskilled, not technicians or executives, not citizens, or members of unions or clubs or churches or families even, but the men who will be all these things. We want men who will have a working knowledge of themselves as members of the human race and as individuals, of the natural world in which they find themselves (and not just as something to be looked at or exploited), of the social world in which they must take their part, and above all, of this mysterious human life of ours which most of us, like most of humanity in the past and in the present, believe is not confined to this earth and the twenty-eight to sixty-eight years or so of the varying life expectancies. We want this free man of ours not only to make at least a beginning of understanding these things, which tax the capacities of the wisest and best-informed of us, but to be able to make up his mind about what he understands, to arrive at preferences and reasons for preferences, to make choices for judgment and action, to take his own hand in things. And we want him to develop not only his powers of understanding and evaluating but of feeling, of enjoying, of wondering, of loving in the great richness of that often abused word.

For the gifted not only in body and mind but in spirit, this is, I think, clear enough. But for the less gifted? Any American who has ever discussed popu-

Miss White, author of *A Watch in the Night* and *The Metaphysical Poets*, is chairman of the English department at the University of Wisconsin.

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lar education with a European, to say nothing of an Asiatic friend, has had to face that question. And now that so many of us are engaged in wringing our hands about the deepening educational crisis of the war babies with, it should be observed, astonishingly little evidence of our good old American practical, do-something-about-it-with-dollars-and-cents approach, we shall have to face it at home, too. Some of the suggestions we are hearing these days for reducing the problem to manageable size might well be called un-American in a very precise and unequivocal sense. At best they suggest a waning of that expansionist spirit that we had always considered the mainspring of American enterprise.

Of course, a problem of such magnitude to a people accustomed to mass production triumphs does invite assembly-line solutions. And they are by no means lacking. Techniques of indoctrination on a large scale have already been experimented with in various parts of the world and brought to varying degrees of perfection. We all know what the Nazis did and from all accounts the Communists, both Russian and Chinese, are doing it now. It is arguable that what our ideological competitors have done we can do and better. I have no doubt of it, though I hope we would encounter more difficulty in doing it. But if we did succeed—nay, if we even considered doing it, we should have administered ourselves a blow beyond anything in the capacity of our worst enemies. We should really have betrayed ourselves.

WHAT we have undertaken to do, what I believe we must continue to undertake to do, is the most difficult thing that has been seen on this earth since its Maker gave His creatures freedom of will, freedom to choose or to refuse to obey. Every parent, every artist, and every teacher, who is something of both, can glimpse if not compass the agony of Omniscience at that risk that dwarfs all other risks men have ever taken, that the supreme Artist's masterpiece might spoil itself. And yet that risk was taken. And that risk was taken because in the realm of the spirit only what is freely given is given at all. Indeed, one may say that only what is freely chosen is chosen, only what is freely done is really done, indeed, only the free spirit really exists. It is because of that cosmic fact that those of us who believe in freedom can face the incredible difficulties which freedom entails with a sense that, however preposterous what we are trying to do may seem historically, it is grounded in the nature of the universe.

In spite of what some people have sometimes seemed to say, fortunately not all of this difficult task rests upon the teacher. All the other institutions of American society have their part: the family and the home, the Church, the various groups of the community from the "our crowd" of the adolescent to the professional groups of maturity, the press and all the other media of modern intellectual interchange. But enough of it rests upon the teacher for society to give some very careful thought to that teacher, generically and individually, for his is a key role in the focusing of many efforts.

To begin with, the teacher must be a free man himself. If he were dealing with a single pupil, an Aristotle with an Alexander, freedom would be indispensable. But dealing, as he must under our circumstances, with large numbers of students with little time for much work with the individual, however much he covets it, his work must too often be casual and indirect. This is regrettable but not hopeless, for in matters of value and taste a preference for the better is often caught rather than taught. A hint, an aside may make a deeper impression on a student than the most labored exposition. From this point of view what the teacher is becomes more important than anything he says, and that is revealed only when he is confident enough to forget himself and give his best to the present moment. Any artist must be free to be himself, the artist in human relations more than anybody else.

I can speak first-hand only for the age I know best, that of the transition between adolescence and manhood, that of the university student. It is an age when many young people are peculiarly alert to any attempt to impose on them. They, especially the ablest of them, are hungry for realities and very suspicious of any effort to put them off. They want to feel that their teacher is dealing fully and frankly with them as befits their maturing dignity. They know that he must weigh his words, especially in the field of his professional responsibility. They do not mind if he pauses to reflect, or admits his own perplexity in complicated matters, or proffers only a provisional opinion in something on which he is still working. But they do not like to feel that he is not saying what he really thinks, that he is afraid to tell them what he believes to be the truth.

OF COURSE, when we ask freedom for the teacher or anybody else, we do not ask for license. No man is free or can be made free who is unprincipled or uninformed or undisciplined. Freedom is fruitless without responsibility and meaningless without purpose. We have a right to demand that the teachers of our children should be men and women of character and general culture and professional competence. As for the unworthy, there are of course some. Every profession has them, but the readiest way to deal with them is to apply professional standards.

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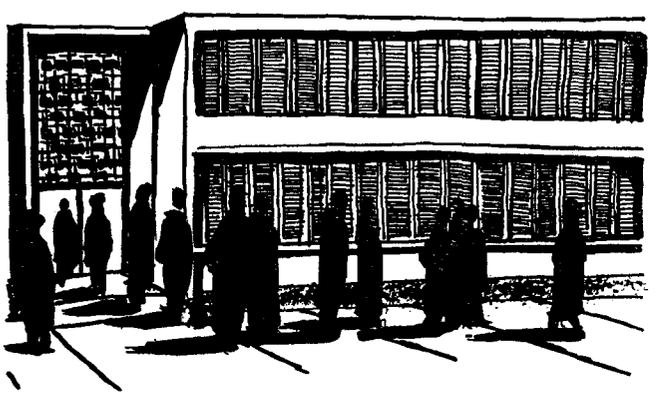
Anyone familiar with the university scene in the troubled thirties will remember a few dubious characters who made much more noise than their numbers ever warranted. But he would be hard pressed to locate them now. To an astonishing degree they eliminated themselves, and that for two reasons. First, they were so busy with their agitations that they had no time to make themselves the seasoned and fruitful scholars upon which every university depends. And they were such nuisances that university faculties, which value their peace as much as any body of men anywhere, took the first chance to let them go. Academic standards and procedures quietly accomplished a house-cleaning that no amount of outside pressure could have effected.

At any time, the teacher who is devoted to something other than his teaching is not likely to deceive either his students or his colleagues for very long in the daily intimacy of the classroom and the office. The rigorous maintenance of high professional standards by everybody involved is the only sure protection of the common interest. Once we have tested our carefully selected teachers in a reasonable probation, we must leave them free to do the work that only free men can do for us.

And yet at a time when the teacher needs his freedom as never before, there are forces at work that are operating to limit it. I use the impersonal description advisedly. Everybody is aware of the figures that make the headlines: the reluctant taxpayers, the enterprising demagogues, the chronic viewers-with-alarm, the endemic busybodies, and the honest citizens genuinely disturbed by all the rumors. But behind them are much larger psychological realities which cannot be so easily exorcised.

One is the passion for security that paradoxically is such a feature of our restless and troubled age. The advancement of science and technology has made it possible for man to live in a world of his own making, with a degree of immunity to the hazards and discomforts of the natural environment beyond anything man has ever known. Indeed, this artificial refuge which man has made for himself offers a degree of responsiveness not only to his needs but to his whims that surpasses the wildest dreams of the fairy-story magician of the past. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that many people should have come to think that all the immemorial hazards of human life on this earth might be eliminated, except death, which it was morbid to think about anyway. The second world war was a sad disillusionment of such hopes, and the present talk of the weapons of a new age and the potential horrors of another war are a continuing frustration.



In another direction, too, the very success of the United States has brought fresh disappointment. Our position in the contemporary world exceeds anything we could have dreamed of, but it is not enough. The whole world has come to our door to admire, to imitate, to ask for help and support, but that same world gives no sign of letting us do what we should like to do, get on with our own business in a sympathetic community of grateful customers for our surpluses and eager suppliers of our not-too-urgent deficiencies and admiring pupils to learn the lessons we would so gladly teach. We are beginning to feel the disadvantages of leadership in a bewilderingly restless and incalculable and far from docile world. We were accustomed to think of ourselves as the ones who were always transforming the status quo. Now we are confronted with a whole earth in the grip of a passion for transformation more impatient even than ours. We did not know too much about where this world was, to begin with, and we know still less about where it is trying to go.

ALL of this is the more exasperating because of that vision of a push-button Utopia that would be within our reach if only we could devote our energies to it. Einstein's search for the one formula that would comprehend the physical operations of the universe expresses something very deep in the imagination of our time, by no means confined to the physical universe. In the realm of society and of the individual alike there is this seeking for the one thing needful, from free enterprise to peace of mind. There is, of course, nothing new in this yearning for a simplification of the human predicament, but it has been given a peculiar urgency by our insistence on security.

And the whole problem has been exacerbated by the very real uncertainties of the cold war. The actuality of an enemy, determined, implacable, is bad enough for many Americans, constitutionally contemptuous of the internecine rivalries of the Old World his fathers forsook. Still worse is the realization that not every American can be counted on to know that his being an American allows him many

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privileges unknown to other peoples. The fact of disloyalty and subversion, however limited, came as a very real shock to a people who had assumed that all U.S. citizens shared a basic appreciation of their national privileges.

These threats to our security are the more keenly felt because we have so much to lose. That is why the least suspicion of a threat to our well-being is so much resented, and hesitations, or suggestions of difference of opinion and even of value are suspect. Teachers as a group are peculiarly exposed in this climate of apprehension. Characteristically, they can hardly be said to be imbued with that commercial spirit that so many regard as indispensable to the functioning of our society. "If you want a good man, you have to pay for him," has all too obviously not been their watchword. Consequently, as a group, they are exposed to the suspicion of a lack of first-hand appreciation of the creative stimulus of the profit-motive. It is hardly surprising that teachers do not cut too impressive a figure in the contemporary marketplace. And what fails to meet the current standards of value can easily in a time of self-distrust fall under grave suspicion.

It is not surprising therefore that various groups in our society have been anxious that our teachers should firmly hold the line for the defense of the blessings we have against dangers, known and unknown, and that they have from time to time come to wonder if teachers could be counted on to do so. The setting up and holding fast to a party line is the common response of the literal-minded materialist to uncertainty, as the contemporary scene abundantly demonstrates. It seems like the readiest way to eliminate dissent and to silence doubt. But it is the worst way to secure the kind of teacher that we need in the United States in the year 1956 and still more in the years ahead when our educational crisis will be really upon us.

For that, above all, we need the kind of teacher who will bring home to our young people the complexity of the world which they face and will help them to develop within themselves the resources, intellectual and spiritual, with which to confront that complexity without being overwhelmed by it. We need the kind of teacher who will hearten them to face the inescapable insecurity of human life with the faith and courage that will transform the vast changes we face on every hand from terrors to opportunities, that will transcend the anxieties of the present moment with the confidence in our values that has made us what we are at our best. But to have that kind of teacher, worthy to teach free men, we need a free man. Freedom to teach the teacher must have—not merely for his own sake, or for the sake of his students, but for the future of America and what America can mean to the human race.

"A PRECIOUS OPPORTUNITY"

The Work of UNESCO

JEROME D'SOUZA

FEW POINTS concerning the organization and activities of the United Nations are so little understood as the functions of the specialized agencies like UNESCO and their relationship with the UN. The mistrust with which UNESCO is regarded is apt to extend to the entire activities of the parent body, and it is therefore likely to affect not only American cooperation with UNESCO but also the attitude of the American citizen to the United Nations itself. The General Assembly of the United Nations has just concluded its sessions in an atmosphere of optimism, due mainly to the return of France and the admission of sixteen new members. More and more people realize that the grave dangers which humanity faces as a result of possible atomic war cannot be avoided except by the action of competent international bodies. Consideration of the relationship of UNESCO to the UN and of its own special role and achievements should therefore be most appropriate at the present moment.

One important fact which is not always borne in mind is that UNESCO is neither one of the organs of the United Nations nor one of its special or functional Commissions. It is a relatively independent International Organization with its own constitution and government, its own separate budget, and a membership which does not necessarily coincide with membership of the United Nations. Until recently Russia was not a member of UNESCO, and some other Communist countries had withdrawn from active member-

Father Jerome D'Souza, S.J., director of the Social Institute in Poona, is a representative of India at the United Nations.

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ship. On the other hand, countries which had not been admitted into the UN were members of UNESCO: independent countries like Spain and Italy, and non-selfgoverning countries like the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and groups in the West Indies territories which enjoyed associate membership. Even today, after the admission of sixteen new members into the United Nations, West Germany and Japan, which are not members of UN, are members of UNESCO, and through that organization make a valuable contribution to genuine international understanding and co-operation.

But though constitutionally independent of the UN, UNESCO works in harmony with it and is affiliated with it as one of its "specialized agencies" through the Economic and Social Council, along with the many other well known organizations like the World Health Organization, the Food and Agricultural Organization and the International Labor Office. Indeed, UNESCO's objectives are not merely in harmony with those of the UN but are often identical with them. UNESCO, more than the other specialized agencies, is called upon to carry out on the ideological plane the aims and objectives of the UN itself. That explains both its strength and its weakness. For UNESCO pursues the objectives of the United Nations in the spirit, and according to the methods, proper to itself.

THE primary objective of the UN is the maintenance and the promotion of peace among nations. This it does first by eliminating causes of war, namely misunderstandings, rivalries and inequalities among nations; and secondly by setting up machinery for discussion and negotiation when disagreements which might lead to war arise among nations. Obviously the work connected with the discussion and settlement of emergent crises is beyond the competence of UNESCO. That is the task of the Security Council and of other organs of the UN. But in the great work of the elimination of the causes of war—the increase of mutual knowledge, and the raising of the status of backward nations all over the world—UNESCO plays a capital role.

This task of removing the causes of war is, to a large extent, an intellectual process. "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." That is the motto of UNESCO, a noble expression from a great Catholic philosopher, Etienne Gilson. In the task of raising the standards of life and culture in backward nations—a task which is essentially for world harmony —study, technical advice, and the dissemination of knowledge are of capital importance. The objectives of the UN need therefore, for their furtherance, an organization of intellectual aim and scope, an organization intended to promote education, science and culture among the Nations. UNESCO is that organization.

The UN proper, in preparing the data for the discussions of the General Assembly and in carrying out its scheme of technical assistance, also has a great deal of scientific and intellectual work to carry out. As a result, on certain points UNESCO and the UN work together in the closest collaboration. There is, for instance, the publicity that UNESCO does in connection with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Covenants by which those rights have to be enforced. This is one of the most constructive and, in its long term effects, one of the chief undertakings of the UN. Equally important is the work of UNESCO in connection with the peaceful use of atomic energy. Again, UNESCO is the instrument for technical assistance to forty-nine countries under the UN expanded program. All these involve the direct execution of some UN projects.

The most impressive work of UNESCO, of course, is that undertaken by its own initiative and in keeping with its own constitution. First among these must be ranked the UNESCO campaign for Fundamental Education. This scheme envisages not only the rapid liquidation of illiteracy among backward people, but also the imparting to them of some idea of their environment and of the nature of the world community, a knowledge of civic duties, instruction in the rules of health and sanitation and in the methods of honest recreation. For this purpose two great centers for the training of teachers, in Mexico and in Egypt, have been founded. The repercussions of this rapidly expanding work will be worldwide.

The scheme of fundamental education deals with what is essentially primary in the stage of culture. But UNESCO also does a work of capital importance in the promotion of scientific research and scientific exchange. It offers a great number of fellowships and sends hundreds of students from one country to another. It conducts well organized seminars in different countries on subjects of scientific or human interest. It arranges for the exchange of professors and students from one country to another and supplies highly qualified staffs to universities in backward areas. All this has done much to increase mutual understanding among people and to foster the sense of comradeship among them, for nothing dissipates national prejudice and antipathies so well as prolonged personal contacts. The thousands of students and professors who are enabled by UNESCO to live in countries foreign to them will gain a sympathetic knowledge of the character and culture of these countries. Today most of them are young, but when the time comes for them to take a leading part in the public life of their respective countries, there is no

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doubt that their influence will, for the most part, be on the side of mutual tolerance and peace and, gradually, of a sense of universal brotherhood.

INEVITABLY, a prominent part of the activity of UNESCO consists in the publication of various types of books and brochures. There are works connected with the United Nations, its aims and objectives as enunciated in the Charter, books on the history and customs of different peoples. Then there are scientific books, both textbooks and advanced research records, books on sociology and also textbooks for various branches of the social sciences. Finally, there are reports of special investigations conducted by UNESCO itself, on the arid zones of the world and the protection of water resources, for instance, and

above all reports on various types of tension that arise within a nation or among the nations—tensions based on racial discrimination or tensions caused by rapid industrialization among backward peoples. These publications constitute a great storehouse of scientific and humanistic learning, a very useful medium for the exchange of ideas and the pooling of scientific data and conclusions.

At the same time, the sharpest criticism that has been levelled against UNESCO has been in connection with some of the publications which have appeared under its auspices. Accusations most commonly made are that UNESCO favors World Government in a sense which would compromise the sovereignty of independent nations, and undermine the virtue of patriotism. Accusations of anti-religious bias and a tendency to Communism have also been made.

These and similar charges were carefully examined by the official delegation of the United States to the 1953 General Conference and dismissed as groundless. Later a non-official Committee came to the same conclusion. (It is true that in one or two brochures published, not officially by the UNESCO, but by authors connected with it, there is no doubt that the terms world government and world citizenship have been used without due explanations and are open to misunderstanding.) UNESCO cannot put forward a doctrine different from that of the UN, whose ideals it must promote, and the fundamental assumption of the UN is that nations are sovereign and that international organizations like the UN and UNESCO should not interfere in matters that pertain to the internal government of a country. It also remains true, however, that much that today passes for patriotism is a narrow nationalism which admits no law higher than the will of the nation as expressed by its government. This is a concept which makes all international agreements on the basis of a universally accepted moral code impossible. That UNESCO should indirectly help in the task of correcting the exaggerations of such a nationalism is both right and natural. It is what the Catholic Church has always done, and Catholics should be the last persons to complain of the true humanism UNESCO tries to inculcate.

Here, perhaps, is the reason the Holy See has ever looked upon the work of UNESCO with interest and sympathy. The Holy See maintains a permanent observer with UNESCO. It has approved and encouraged the participation of Catholics, including leading educationalists from some of the religious orders, in the General Conference. The policy of UNESCO is formulated by the General Conference, and if Catholic nations take their due share in the work of UNESCO their delegates will then be in a position to guide and direct the policy of the Organization to a very substantial extent. The work of UNESCO will go on, achieving greater and greater scope and amplitude. Suspicion and aloofness on the part of Catholics will not improve matters, but will only deprive us of a precious opportunity to improve international relations and help in the formulation of international policies in the light of Catholic ideals.

ALL this does not mean that there are no blemishes in the spirit and work of UNESCO and that everything about it is equally good and acceptable. There are deficiencies on the organizational side. There is unnecessary overlapping of activities between UN and UNESCO and the other specialized agencies. The aims and objectives of UNESCO itself are too vast and sometimes too vaguely formulated for effective achievement. Its financial resources are not sufficient to carry out the beneficent schemes which it has undertaken. Some of the reports and publications of UNESCO, as indeed of the UN as a whole, are couched in a technical jargon which becomes increasingly difficult for the ordinary man to understand. There are, in these bodies, "experts" who seem incapable of writing a single sentence in simple straightforward language, and failure to "communicate" its message in clear language is a serious drawback in an essentially rational undertaking. Unfortunately, there are not many signs that most of these defects will be remedied quickly or effectively.

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Above all, there is in most of the official declarations and enunciations of the high ideals of UNESCO such a belief in the power of science and knowledge to reform human conduct, such a naive assumption that UNESCO has the secret for solving almost all the ills of the world, that one would almost believe that UNESCO was a kind of new Gospel whose sacredness it would be irreverent to question. Yet knowledge cannot reform human nature, and wars cannot be banished by scientific and cultural advance alone.

As Newman said, we may sooner moor a ship with a silken thread or cut a rock with a razor than hope to tame by the frail instrument of knowledge those monsters, the passion and the pride of Man; they can be tamed only by the grace of God, and the Gospel of Christ describes the means by which that grace can flow into the human heart. But knowledge, true enlightenment regarding the world of nature and of man, is a good preparation for the Gospel. It is also a very valuable ally in explaining and deepening the Faith. It is the duty of Catholics to utilize this auxiliary and not allow it to fall into the hands of the enemy and strengthen *his* ranks.

BRITISH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Failure of an Elite

J. L. BENVENISTI

THE educational crisis that seems to be boiling up in America has its counterpart here in England. We too are finding ourselves alarmingly short of trained scientists, and since the matter is one affecting the security and even the survival of this little island, it is creating some public concern.

The purely utilitarian aspects of this shortage of scientists have been quite adequately dealt with in the British press. But an even larger question still remains undiscussed: to what extent will certain alleged values be lost if our educational systems begin to take a predominantly non-humanistic turn?

To that question recent British history provides, if not a full answer, at least an eloquent indication of an answer; I can best explain this by starting to talk about something that seems at first to have no apparent connection with the subject whatever, the development that might well be called the twilight of an oligarchy.

It would be wrong to say that in Britain today oligarchy is dead. Despite high wages, intensive popular education, huge redistributive taxes and the welfare state, Britain at the moment is still a recognizably stratified society, a society with a distinctive governing class, an elite, but it is now an elite with a difference; it is an elite that has somehow subtly changed its tone, and gives a certain unmistakable impression of being on the defensive.

Taken by and large this elite, this co-optive Venetian oligarchy—the term was Disraeli's and even today it is not wholly inapplicable—has in the past worked tolerably well. If it was not altogether a government by the wise and good, it was neither narrow-minded nor caste-ridden. It was liberal in its policy of co-option and immensely public-spirited. As oligarchies go, it measured up to the best. Nevertheless, twenty-five years ago it failed, and failed disastrously, for it failed in that very department where, from its very nature and the manner of its constitution, it could have been strong.

For what makes you a member of this oligarchy, this governing class is neither birth, background nor even, in many circumstances, money. These things count and may—except in the case of mere money—suffice by themselves, but they are not indispensable. The important thing, and in many cases the determining thing, is the fact that you have attended a certain kind of school, known in Britain as a "Public School" because it is administered by a public body and is thus distinguishable from schools which are privately owned.

THESE public schools are fee-paying schools for members of the upper and middle income groups which comprise the professional classes. A few boys of working-class origin have of late been somewhat spectacularly accepted as a kind of concession to the times, but such cases are very recent and quite exceptional. In the main these schools still draw their pupils from boys of a certain social background, but it is the school even more than the background that

Mr. Benvenisti is an English writer and economist who has contributed frequently to The Commonweal.

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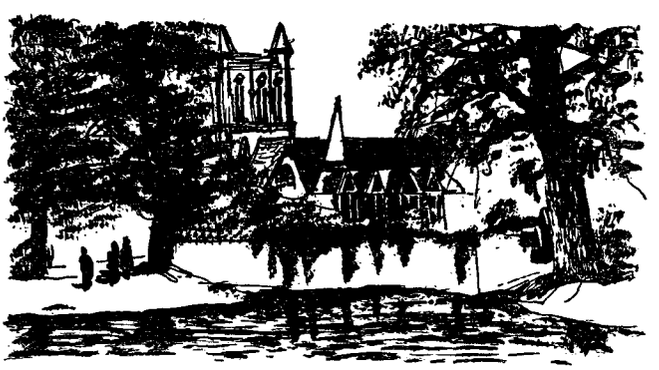
ultimately stamps the man as "belonging," and for the able and ambitious it is through these schools, and through the greater universities which they feed, that the broad avenue lies open to political and administrative power.

It is true that many men with brains and energy who have not this privileged mark are continually thrusting their way upward, but theirs is the thorny and more difficult path. Even within the Labor party a large proportion of members are old public-school boys. Clement Attlee is a typical example, as is his successor, Hugh Gaitskell. Herbert Morrison, the defeated candidate for the leadership, was not of this kind, and his defeat is, perhaps, not without significance. It was not always thus, of course, and the increasing infiltration by the governing class into the Labor party is to some extent part of the "new look" which that class is beginning to affect.

There is, of course, in this change nothing in the nature of masquerade or conscious stage-management —the public school left-wingers are all perfectly sincere—nor is this governing class deliberately setting itself to live anything down. Yet the fact remains that a quarter of a century ago it failed, and this failure is still remembered and to some extent still held against it.

THE failure to which I have been alluding is the failure to correct the Great Depression despite the fact that the economists at the great universities were already pointing the way. The British governing class, then enjoying an immensity of power through its most representative organ, the Tory party, utterly missed this great opportunity, and the fact that the



peoples of the civilized world, or at any rate their governments, are today, almost as a matter of course, all good Keynesians is due much more to America than it is to Britain. Even President Roosevelt, of course, did not do all he might have done, but his task in the hectic political atmosphere of America was infinitely more difficult than that of his opposite numbers in England. In that country a really vigorous and imaginative policy from the Tories would have been virtually unopposed and the dominions would certainly have followed a lead from Westminster. Indeed they would have been eager to do so and their eagerness would have been rewarded.

The British Commonwealth had everything in the way of primary products, food, raw materials, industrial skills and equipment. Given the instruments of cheap credit, loans and public works, it could have broken the slump within three years. If America had chosen to cooperate, so much the better, but it could have been done even without America.

But we did not break the slump. We got cheap credit, it is true, and we made what we could out of the windfall of the collapse of raw material prices. For the rest, however, our leaders were satisfied with mere tinkering and the great job was never really tackled at all.

Looked at in retrospect, this failure is astonishing. A yawning gulf seems to have opened between what was being taught at Cambridge (and elsewhere) and what was being done (or not done) at Westminster, and this despite the fact that the plain commonsense of what the economists were saying could be stated in comparatively simple language. The heads of the government simply did not understand what was happening and, even worse, they did not take the trouble to learn. They shied away from the whole problem, resigned themselves to the inertia of habit and seemed to look upon the whole matter as an act of God.

This was a failure in the very department where these people above all others should not have failed, for it was an intellectual failure by men whose intellectual training had been the most expensive and, of its kind, the best in the world. Moreover, these men held their positions of eminence and esteem because they were the pick of a certain type, which had been largely molded into what it was by the kind of schools it had attended.

We are thus surely justified in looking very closely at the nature of the intellectual training which these schools provided. Excellent of its kind that training undoubtedly was. But was it the right kind to equip these men for the specific tasks of a leader class? Did it inculcate those qualities of intellectual alertness and of unflagging intellectual appetite without which such a class cannot permanently hope to justify itself?

THE nature of the education furnished by the public schools was, and is, predominantly classical. It is true that nearly all of them also have what is called a "modern" side on which science and physics are taught, but this modern side is still looked on as a kind of fifth wheel. It has no part in the traditions of the school, which are still based on

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the assumption that a true education, the education of the "full and rounded man"—whatever that may mean —can only be based on the classics, that is to say on a knowledge of the Greek and Latin tongues and their literature. Indeed, the headmasters of these schools are almost invariably classicists—I say "almost invariably" out of caution, although I do not know a single case where it is otherwise.

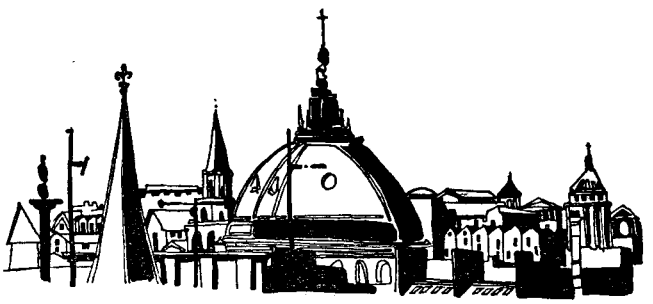
Admittedly, these schools attempt to inculcate other values than the purely scholastic; it is also true that many public school boys achieve success with rather less learning than their schools are ready to impart. Not every Tory M.P. nor every top British administrator is a ripe classical scholar—more's the pity perhaps—though some of them actually are that. But the values they have absorbed, the mental attitudes they have acquired during their schooling, are those resulting from a classical education.

This whole educational practice and tradition is defended on the ground that the study of the ancient tongues provides in some mysterious and unexplained way the thing we call "mental discipline," that it "teaches you how to think" and that it does this in some way that no other form of study is capable of doing. If this means anything at all, then the study of the ancient tongues is indeed a most desirable thing and should at all costs be pursued.

And yet I am profoundly sceptical about the whole assertion. If the classics teach people to think, how can one explain the fact that a body of men for whom the classics are supposed to have provided the very backbone of their education were smitten by a kind of mental paralysis at the most critical moment of their administrative careers? In fact, these men, on such a critical occasion, seemed to back away from the whole process of thought, study and inquiry, as though it were a nasty smell.

It is hard not to be led to the opposite conclusion, and to blame this predominantly classical education for the ineffectual way these men in high places acted in regard to what was essentially an intellectual problem. I believe that excessive concentration on the classics leads men almost unconsciously to assume that the highest intellectual values are things remote from ordinary life, and that the concerns of ordinary life are essentially servile and unworthy of serious study. It leads to a sort of Ivory Towerism.

ANY MORE favorable views that I may once have entertained were finally dispelled by my experience in America. For there I found enough men, some of them college teachers of humanistic subjects, who did not know a word of Latin, let alone of Greek, and who were very far from suffering from any intellectual inadequacy. If these men had not been taught "how to think," I certainly did not notice it. Actually I think that the reasoning process is not developed by the study either of this subject or that, but by life as a whole, and I suspect all contrary assertions to be so much sales-talk by people who are trying to put an excessive price on the only wares they are capable of carrying to market.



Whether statesmen trained in the sciences would have done any better twenty-five years ago, I do not know, but somehow I believe they would. Chemists and physicists are at least trained to keep their eyes fixed on the living reality about them, and if some of them fall into the error of thinking that ultimate truth can be found in the test tube or the mathematical formula—and the best of them do not—at least they are men with whom patient and dispassionate inquiry has become almost an instinct, who are trained to accept nothing without proof, and have a healthy distrust of phrases. I think that such men would have had the cat-like curiosity to smell around and see just what these economists were up to and would have been more likely to get their teeth into anything that seemed even moderately good.

I may be wrong, but I say this to such Americans who may be trembling for the future of American education and who shudder as they see the humanities crowded into a corner: "Be of good cheer. What you are about to receive may prove better than you anticipate. It certainly cannot prove worse than what we in England have experienced."

AN APPEAL

Father Victor Rajanayagam, O.S.B., of Holy Rosary Mission, Bogawantalawa, Ceylon, needs funds for his work among impoverished tea plantation workers. "These seventy thousand people live in the most abject conditions. A whole family, six or seven, is huddled in a room of ten by twelve feet which also serves as a kitchen." Maximum pay is $13 for a whole month. The owners of the mission's rented land are prepared to donate two acres. In a few months students have increased to over three hundred; a school building and chapel are greatly needed. Donations may be sent to Father Rajanayagam direct or in care of his bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. D. B. Regno, O.S.B., Bishop's House, Kandy, Ceylon. (Airmail: 25¢)

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THE STAGE

PRESTIDIGITATION

THE celebrated Mr. Alfred Lunt and his wife, Miss Lynn Fontanne, all their luster and high dazzle of craft no less fearfully intact, are back with an amiable tissue of East vs. West trumpery by the Messrs. Lindsay and Crouse. The vehicle which they ride with such indolent ease, "The Great Sebastians," is rather more pretext than play: a meager peppering of wit laces it, but small savor and less truth, and only a smart commercial competence which, happily for once, does not rasp. I must add that the dramatists are inexcusably tasteless about the suicide of Jan Masaryk—gross impertinence to introduce this political tragedy into their Iron Curtain circus—and I might say that "The Great Sebastians" offers to collectors of cold war neurotica on our stage a succulent prize. At one point in the Lindsay-Crouse melodrama, a commissar has had guests to dinner, and the ladies retire to the drawing room for some socialist chit-chat. One is a quiet collective mouse; another a bold blonde lioness who was born in an army uniform, and the third a sleek satellite tigress whose materialism probably couldn't be more dialectical, but whose gown and figure suggest the possibility of frequent appearances on the cover of the *People's Bazaar*. After the amenities—"But Sophie, you know our duty to the party comes first"—the gentlemen enter, and the tigress congratulates the commissar on his handsome house, appropriated after nationalization from a family of Czech capitalists. She turns then to the audience, steaming away at her cigarette and everything else, and muses ferociously: "How I hated them! Oh, how I hated them! When I was a little girl, I used to walk past this house, and I *never* could see over the walls!"

Mr. Lunt and Miss Fontanne, of course, palpably disdain such horrors, except for the few moments of rather tatty pathos they must work up over the Masaryk affair. They play here a vaudeville team of mind readers —two genial frauds—and there is perhaps something suggestive in this of their place in the world of art. For Mr. Lunt and Miss Fontanne are prestidigitators of an absolute eminence: one must not, is not free to, patronize the intense glamour of their mutual personality: it is totally earned. If, as I sometimes think, there is a poetry of pure craft, then the Lunts inhabit its climate. He possibly offers a less rich personality to one's theatrical delight: the voice is wonderfully various, the face of curdled custard (with its expression of pained anxiety) vastly comic, but his palette somewhat arid and monochromatic. Miss Fontanne, however, has the finality—the invulnerable serenity and *élan*—of the great actress. When I consider what she did for Mr. Noel Coward's wheezing "Quadrille"—the elegance of line with which she drew his Marchioness, her bold, glittering movement, the regality and shimmer with which she frosted his stale cakes of custom—and then turn to the papery caricature of "The Great Sebastians" and note with what wit and domestic good will she has invested it, what shrewd Cockney commonsense, her voice sliding imperceptibly yet always into a delicious vulgarity. . . .

Yet the Lunts seem to me players who have deliberately closed the door on a more intense world of the imagination (this is the great scandal which pursues them: the uses to which they lend themselves) not because its demands have exhausted their spirits, nor even because they are stiffened by fear of its challenges, but rather because certain kinds of experience—in art and in life—do not interest them. A fatal complacency, perhaps, has drawn an invisible net about their sensibilities. Within their polished glass bell, they move, surely, in the odor of distinction, but nothing more: ageless illusionists going so unwearyingly, without hazard, through their hard, brilliant arabesques of glamour.

I cannot resist, in closing, the malice of an anecdote about the faultless Lunts drawn from Mr. Kenneth Tynan's elegantly creamy "anthology of unique human beings," *Persona Grata*. Here it is entire: "Only once in recent memory has their machine of interplaying seized up. This happened a few years ago, when they were starring in S. N. Behrman's comedy *I Know My Love*. Hundreds of performances went by without a hitch until one evening in the middle of a particularly intricate two-handed rally, both froze in their tracks, unable to emit a word: two supreme technocrats, musclebound by too much technique. The prompter hunted for the line, and had hissed it thrice in mounting horror before Mr. Lunt's voice came whispering hoarsely back at him. 'We know the line, dear boy,' it said desperately: 'but we don't know which of us says it.'" (*At the ANTA Playhouse.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

VARIOUS VIOLENCES

IT'S A PLEASURE to see a prize-fight film in which there isn't a single fixed fight and the hero doesn't win a smash victory at the end by knocking his opponent out of the ring. Actually, our pugilistic hero does win a victory at the finale of "The Square Jungle," but it is a psychological one that promises happier days now that our boy has suffered through a mental depression. In telling the story of a young

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grocery clerk who fights an amateur bout to win enough to get his hard-drinking father out of jail and who then becomes a professional boxer, "The Square Jungle" attempts to present a few problems in the ethics of prize fighting. It does not really solve any of them, especially the main proposition about a fighter who beats his opponent to a pulp; but George Zuckerman has written an interesting screenplay, and Director Jerry Hopper has fashioned it into an unconventional film.

Tony Curtis plays the lead role with conviction; and the training scenes, as well as the sequences in the three matches that Tony has with John Day, are done with considerable realism. Furthermore, without getting too pretentious the picture is effective in developing the relationships between Tony and his widower father (Jim Backus) who hits the bottle, his backer (Paul Kelly) who is on the police force, and his trainer (Ernest Borgnine), an ex-convict who knows the fight game well, reads books and talks like a Hemingway character who just passed Philosophy I. The girls are relegated to the background, but on hand are Pat Crowley as Tony's true love, and Leigh Snowden as a blonde tramp who joins him when he goes on a drunken binge of remorse after almost killing an opponent to win the title. Although "The Square Jungle" raises more problems than it answers, Trainer Borgnine makes clear to Tony and the audience that a fighter has responsibilities, especially a champ.

EVEN those who don't expect "Hell on Frisco Bay" to be as good as "On the Waterfront" are likely to be disappointed with this new picture about racketeering among dock workers. Edward G. Robinson makes the San Francisco waterfront boss one of the most viciously repulsive characters ever to appear in a movie, but the plot, which is confused and overloaded with repulsive types, is mainly concerned with an ex-cop (Alan Ladd) fresh out of San Quentin and determined to get the man who sent him to prison on a false charge. Ladd follows a series of clues that involve him in one fight after the other, but he's a tough guy and bounces back after each rough encounter hell-bent for vengeance. In fact, Ladd is so tough and busy he hasn't even time to forgive his wife (Joanne Dru) who admits she was unfaithful while he was in the big house but still loves him. Most people will probably give up trying to follow the long and complicated list of characters, but the film does have a spark of interest every now and then—as in the romance between one of Robinson's henchmen (Paul Stewart) and an ex-film star (Fay Wray)—and I did find myself really hoping that the cruel killer who ran the waterfront would get his just deserts. He did.

IF YOU want to see real fishermen in action, there is an excellent documentary called "Naked Sea" which takes you on an exciting sixteen-week trip from San Diego to Panama to the Galapagos Islands and finally to deep waters off Peru where these hardy men make their big catch. Produced, directed and beautifully photographed by Allen H. Miner, "Naked Sea" successfully combines a spirit of adventure, with its remarkable shots of the Pacific, and of hard work, with its fine scenes of day-to-day life aboard a ship handled by men who depend on unpredictable tuna for a living. At times the narrator gets a little flowery in his enthusiastic descriptions, but the visuals are the real thing, and they never lag in interest.

TOM EWELL, who played the imaginative husband in "The Seven Year Itch," now plays an imaginative, three-year-married husband in "The Lieutenant Wore Skirts." His imagination, however, works overtime not in affairs with the girl upstairs and other women, but how to get his wife out of the WAFs. The wife, played by Sheree North, enlisted when her husband, whom she loves very much, was about to be recalled into the Air Force. But he didn't pass the physical, so Sheree's in and Tom's out. Unfortunately, this theme, which has certain possibilities for a movie, is dragged out endlessly, and often tastelessly, by Director Frank Tashlin, and long before the halfway point the story that starts as an amusing comedy becomes a tiresome farce. Ewell and North do what they can with the material on hand, but even they can't keep the single note going, and the jokes try so hard to emulate Ewell's previous success that the picture might well have been called "The Three Year Itch."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

OF NOTE

STATE AID TO CHURCH SCHOOLS

THE SPRING issue of the *Saint Louis University Law Journal* (Saint Louis 8, Missouri) contains a discussion by the Rev. R. J. Henle, S.J., on the legal aspects of state aid to religious schools. Excerpts are given below:

. . . Respect for the individual conscience is, I submit, an American ideal firmly rooted in philosophical principles and, to a large extent, worked out in legal and political practice. We are still engaged in the task of making the practical application of this

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ideal more complete, for the practical situations in which the ideal is to be realized are extremely complex and require the simultaneous and balanced application of many principles.

In the concrete, the religious convictions, practice and activities of the citizens do, as a matter of fact, meet and intertwine with the political and legal functioning of the government. Religious activity as an activity of citizens must be carried on within a political and legal framework. They require a legal status in order to exist and yet this status must be such that neither is the conscience of the citizen violated or impeded nor is the state turned into a church.

I would like to present one example in which we have ingeniously managed the requisite balance. This is the marriage ceremony. In governments which have an established religion, the tendency is often to make a definite religious act the only legal ceremony. On the other hand, in a positively secular or anti-religious state the tendency is to recognize a civil ceremony as the only legal one. In the first case, non-conformists, in the second case, religious people generally are forced into a conflict between their conscience and their citizenship.

But we in America have solved this problem. The jurisdiction of the State is protected by requiring a license prior to the marriage ceremony. Once the license is issued, the State maintains a perfectly neutral attitude. The parties to be married are free to choose that type of ceremony which fits their own conscience and desires. The State then accepts the official so chosen as the legal official for the marriage. Thus the citizens select the rabbi, the minister or the priest because he is a rabbi, a minister or a priest, but the State is indifferent to him, *qua* rabbi, *qua* minister or *qua* priest. It accepts rabbi, minister or priest as the choice of its citizens. Thus we have solved a problem which has bedeviled the relations of Church and State in most European countries. The eminent reasonableness and fairness, the fine balance of principles typified in this instance are the characteristic marks of the American way of facing these problems.

Now in the matter of education we have likewise a practical problem involving a great complexity of facts and requiring the application of a great complexity of principles. The principles and ideals which I have described are all applicable but in education another principle must be recognized; namely, that the family is the basic unit of society and has a primary right with regard to the education of its children. . . .

It is an immediate consequence of this principle and of the principle of religious liberty that parents have a full right to raise their children in their own religion and to educate them in accordance with their own conscience. It is an obvious corollary of this

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that individuals or groups have the right to set up schools and institutions in full accord with their own consciences and with the conscience of those who come to them or entrust their children to them.

Now the State also, as a political instrument of society, has a definite stake in education. But the State enters the educational picture not only in such a way as not to violate religious liberty but also in such a way as to protect its exercise. Thus, on the one hand the State cares for the common welfare by setting a minimum school leaving age, by requiring courses in history or civics, by setting minimum standards for teacher certification, and so forth.

But likewise the State gives legal status to the religious school, not because it is religious, not because it is Catholic or Protestant, but because it is the result of a free religious or educational choice of the citizens who set it up and who patronize it. The religious school thus receives the full benefit of the law as a beneficent and welfare institution and as an educational institution. It is clear, then, that the State when it enters education must leave the choice of religious or non-religious education up to the individual or his parents and must, as it does in the marriage arrangement, accept the choice of the citizen, giving it full legal protection and not penalizing the citizen for thus exercising his rights. . . .

One of the main intentions in the Public School System of America is to make free education available to all citizens. Any citizen may avail himself of public help in educating his children by sending them to a public school. Unfortunately, however, this excellent intention and purpose is implemented in an unrealistic manner. The very form which the aid takes in the concrete sets up a religious qualification or rather disqualification. For the simple fact of the matter is that many religious persons cannot send their children to the public school without violating their conscience. . . .

We cannot, as Americans, simply say that this religious scruple is their own affair; that they may come to the public schools if they want aid, but, if they choose not to do so, that's their own affair. This religious conscience is one of the factors in the case and must be taken into account by the government. Religious liberty and the prohibition of religious qualifications are meaningless unless they relate to the precise peculiarities of each type of conscience. Hence, our courts have shown a punctilious and precise concern to protect the consciences even of minorities commonly regarded as extremists. The court simply ininquires what the conscience of the individual is; it does not judge that conscience *as a conscience,* but takes it into account *as a fact* and provides for it.

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This, I submit, is the American way imposed upon us by all our principles. We may think that a conscience which is violated by attendance at a public school is a foolish conscience or a fanatical one, but, as Americans, at the legal and political level we simply accept it as the "other fellow's" conscience and provide for it. . . .

There is yet another way to outline the problem. Consider the case of an impoverished Seventh Day Adventist. There is the compulsory attendance law; he must send his children to school. The public school provides an education in violation of his conscience. On the other hand is the economic pressure of his poverty; he cannot afford to provide a religious school for his children, or to pay the modest fees at his local religious school or to send his children to a boarding school (as the case may be). In this situation, the law and the economic pressure *force* him to send his children to a school which violates his conscience. There is no real choice, and the law here becomes a compulsion against religion. . . .

It might be said that the economic pressure is no concern of the State. Yet, it is our concern as Americans not to render lip service to an abstract religious liberty, but to work it out and safeguard it in the concrete. As a matter of fact, in the area of labor law, the courts have recognized "economic pressure" as destroying any real choice when it is actually present.

If, in the factual situation, there is no real choice, under the law, except to violate one's conscience, then the law is not safeguarding religious liberty. And this is the worst form of religious discrimination, because it allows true religious liberty only to those who can afford it. American ideals demand an arrangement which will allow religious liberty for *each* man's conscience, for Catholic, Protestant, Jew and unbeliever, for rich and poor alike.

We are thus faced with this practical situation: American ideals and principles demand that the educational aid, intended to be made available to all through the public school, should *actually* be made available to all American children whether they attend a public school or, for reasons of conscience, a religious school. The Lutheran parent or child, the Catholic parent or child, the Seventh Day Adventist parent or child, and so forth, who need and want this aid, are entitled to an equivalent share of public aid from the funds to which they also contribute under the law. . . .

We have a precedent for a concrete solution in the veteran's educational benefits. The law looks to the welfare of the veteran; his freedom of choice is completely protected; he may choose a state institution or a religious institution or even a Divinity

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School. The State accepts his choice and pays the set fees. Here again the fees may go to a religious school, and will "aid" it, but the government is not paying the fees to the school because it is a religious school or in order to aid religion.

In a similar manner we could work out a plan envisioning the child or parent as the beneficiary of all funds collected for educational purposes; if the parent selected the public school the funds can be made available through the public school; if, for conscience reasons, the parent selected a religious school, the fees (to a fair amount) could be paid in the name of the child or parent and in view of the education, not the religious functions of the institution. . . .

It should be noted that I have not argued that any religious group should accept such aid. Official spokesmen for various religious groups have stated that they do not desire direct educational aid. What the parents involved may, as American citizens, wish is yet another question. I have been presenting what I conceive to be the necessary implications of the American ideal. To me it is a question of principle. Whether or not religious parents or their children or their schools ever accept a single penny of public aid, I am convinced as an American that it is essential to the integral protection of our freedoms that this right be recognized, at least in principle.

COMMUNICATIONS

"A QUESTION OF CONFIDENCE"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Mr. O'Donnell is right—there is in France an "acrid moral intensity" ["A Question of Confidence," Jan. 6]. There is an ever readiness to voice one's own right or one's own assurance of being right. All, as Mr. O'Donnell points out, seem anxious that nothing is "put over" on them. No doubt this is an attitude most aggravating to foreigners visiting the country. It is useless to find excuses for it, but perhaps I may offer some explanations differing somewhat from Mr. O'Donnell's.

First of all, there are the repeated national experiences of foreign armies of occupation, which, throughout the centuries, the people survived only because they were sharply determined not to be imposed upon. The occupant eventually goes away; the habit remains.

Secondly, there is in France an inborn national love for discussion, for airing one's feelings, and, above all, for protesting. Watch an American crowd standing in line: they are silent. But the French voice their discontent at waiting. I agree that it does not make

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the line move any faster, but, as one born in France, I feel it makes the waiting much more bearable—whereas the American way often seems to me dull frustration! . . .

Thirdly, much of the present daily encountering of expressions of discontent in France are only safety valves, or *ersatz*, for a much deeper and real trouble. People in France today simply do not make decent living wages, that is, most of them don't, whether employees, shopkeepers or manual workers.

Finally, though there may be indeed in France over emphasis on the intellect, nevertheless I cannot fully agree with Mr. O'Donnell about the State schools. It is true that too much importance is given intellectual standing to the exclusion of cooperative spirit. But one should not infer from this that the State schools have no concern for "spiritual values and character." Far from it, for the requirements along that line have a tendency to be even too stiff, being enforced by teachers, most of whom have unusually high moral standards in their personal lives.

Mr. O'Donnell's concern with the "most versatile and insidious of sins," intellectual pride, brings to my mind the question an American priest asked a penitent confessing intellectual pride. "Don't you think God has intellect?" Whereupon the penitent could not but laugh. "Of course!" went on the priest. "Then all you need is to give joyful thanks *to Him* for your intellect." Maybe that is the way French parents should talk to the bright youngsters; it would remove the pride, and, thank God, leave the intellect!

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"THE BRIDGE"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Having just finished *The Bridge: A Yearbook of Judaeo-Christian Studies,* edited by Father John M. Oesterreicher, I was of course most interested in reading the review of it in your December 23rd issue. And I thought Father Mohan and I were getting along all right until I came to his paragraph dealing with "The Enigma of Simone Weil."

Father Mohan states that he disagrees with Father Oesterreicher's evaluation of Simone Weil. To quote Father Mohan: "However unselfish and admirable her life, Simone Weil . . . was not simply an uncommitted Christian. She was not a Christian at all."

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What confused me about this was that the statement had such a familiar ring. Where had I heard it before? I leafed back through The Enigma and found the following: "Still for all her desire to suffer, even to suffer like Christ, Simone Weil was not a Christian." Again, after quoting Simone Weil at some length, Father Oesterreicher writes: "I find it painful to read and write down these words, so completely divorced from all biblical faith. They are gnosticism in all its deceiving glamour with every tie to Judaeo-Christian wisdom gone. And again: "Need I counter that Simone Weil's understanding of Christ's cry is not Christian?"

There are still other excerpts from "The Enigma of Simone Weil" which I could quote to prove my point: namely, that Father Oesterreicher's whole article seems to me to point to the imperfections in Simone Weil's philosophy and the limitations to her faith and I do not see wherein Father Mohan's disagreement with the author lies. . . .

ETHEL MORRISON.

REPLY

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: I was asked last month by the Editors of The Commonweal to review Seton Hall University's yearbook of Judaeo-Christian studies, *The Bridge,* in six hundred words. The volume I read with great interest, but under the circumstances, the impossibility of a critical evaluation of each article seemed obvious to me then, as it seems obvious to me now. Such an attempt in a few off-hand words would constitute an egregious disservice to the authors and the quality of their work.

I chose the six hundred words to note: the statement of purpose, which I thought admirable; the general quality of the scholarship, which I thought serious; the fields of interest, which I thought wide; the physical make-up, which I thought excellent; and some disagreement in evaluation, which I thought inevitable. I also noted the ideological climate of the day, which, I sincerely believe, gives this enterprise its timeliness.

As Ethel Morrison so courteously points out, I also gave the impression that Father Oesterreicher himself considers Simone Weil the "Saint of the Unchurched." But the "attempts" to which I referred—and which I should have explained more clearly—are the evaluations of Simone Weil, such as those of Reinhold Schneider, *cited* by Father Oesterreicher. I did indeed disagree with a few of the positions assumed by the authors of the various articles of *The Bridge,* but I consider Father Oesterricher's own appraisal of Simone Weil incapable of refutation.

(*Rev.*) ROBERT PAUL MOHAN, S. S.

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Short Stories of New and Established Writers

PRIZE STORIES 1956. Selected and edited by Paul Engle and Hansford Martin. Doubleday. $3.95.

By WILLIAM J. SMITH

THIS thirty-sixth annual volume of the O. Henry Award stories contains selections from publications as diverse as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Botteghe Oscure* and authors that range from unknown quantities to the Nobelian dignity of William Faulkner.

Few would quarrel with the general excellence of the stories in the collection. The choice is, perhaps, a little self-consciously representative, with the *New Yorker* and the *Atlantic Monthly* carefully balanced off against *Perspective* and the *Antioch Review,* and Mr. Faulkner and Jean Stafford against unknowns like James Buechler and Joseph Whitehill. The remarkable fact is that it is still possible to glean a good volume of short stories from the rapidly dwindling annual supply. The half dozen or so literary quarterlies publish perhaps twenty stories a year, the plushy monthlies increasingly avoid the short story altogether, and among the weeklies only the *New Yorker* consistently publishes first-rate stories. The evanescent little magazines, in their paranoid seclusion, tend now to indulge in pointless fantasies as a dubious substitute for the clinical case studies that were their stock in trade a few years ago. All in all, the field is limited and very possibly moribund. Indeed, the editors (and, as much, the publishers, for encouraging the commercially unproductive short story market) deserve every credit for making available to the general public a number of excellent stories which otherwise would disappear into the limbo of back copies.

Inevitably one will dispute the relative merits of the three "prize" stories, which, as usual, lead off this annual collection. First prize this year goes to John Cheever for his "The Country Husband," from the pages of the *New Yorker.* Why, it is hard to say. It is a perfect example of why people stop reading the *New Yorker* and limit themselves to the cartoons and the bottom-of-the-column squibs. The choice seems particularly unfortunate when one considers the number of really fine stories the *New Yorker* does print every year. Second and third prizes go to "new" writers James Buechler ("Pepicelli," from the *Harvard Advocate*) and R. V. Cassill ("The Prize," from *Perspective*). Far and away superior to the others are Saul Bellow's "The Gonzaga Manuscripts" and Hortense Calisher's "The Night Club in the Woods." Both of these stories, interestingly enough, are from the now apparently defunct *Discovery,* which died in its valiant and erratic attempts to elevate the tastes of the reading public. It can hardly, incidentally, have required much perspicuity to discover either Mr. Bellow or Miss Calisher, who were securely established long before they were "discovered." The fact, in any event, tends to confirm the cynicism which grows in the minds of those who wish, laudably enough, to encourage new writers. Good new writers are rarer, unfortunately, even than that *rara avis,* the good established writer. One begins even to question that truism of the *avant-garde* that there are countless superb though iconoclastic talents languishing in editorial waiting-rooms.

Mr. Bellow's "The Gonzaga Manuscripts" is a delightful *jeu d'esprit* about a dilettantish American scholar in Spain, and a wonderful switch on the tired theme of the American exposed to Old World Tradition. Old World Tradition, in this case, turns out to be a delirious speculative interest in the atom bomb and uranium deposits. Miss Calisher's "The Night Club in the Woods" accomplishes the marvelous literary feat of finding the commonplace in a mystery and then revealing the mystery in the commonplace. These two stories alone would make the collection worth while. But there are also newcomers who show up to special advantage, as, for example, in the stories of Herbert Gold, Robie Macauley, and Howard Nemerov. Perhaps, after all, the short story is not dead.

FRENCH GIRLS ARE VICIOUS And Other Stories. By James T. Farrell. Vanguard. $3.50.

By FRANK GETLEIN

IN the longest of these nine short stories, "Ruth and Bertram," we find Bert, at the end, comfortably into bourgeois middle age after a youth of dissipation with Ruth. Like most of Mr. Farrell's people, Bert is a simple soul, and, as often in this volume, we walk right into his mind and let him reveal himself to us while the author invites us to smile ironically with him. In his exquisitely decorated apartment high above Chicago's Near North Side, Bert sips a drink and vaguely remembers Ruth: "He would like to see Ruth again, but perhaps he never would. He was mildly sad. Life was not important enough for one to feel it too deeply. One needed a shield against it, and life was fascinating with this shield that you held up before it. Style was a shield against life, and that was what he had seen and admired in Henry James all these years."

The statement on style probably represents the author's view, but it is hard to tell which came first, the author's deprecatory opinion of style or his own complete lack of it.

At the same time, Mr. Farrell has always had two important qualities that make it impossible to dismiss him. He is relentlessly honest and in the face of a fact he is artistically humble. These very virtues, perhaps, are responsible for the stylistic deficiencies. By the end of the present collection, at any rate, Mr. Farrell has convinced you that he will never write a graceful sen-

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tence and that it probably doesn't matter very much. You can't have everything. You take what you can get. What you can get from Mr. Farrell are honesty and humility and they're worth the additional effort his writing imposes.

To these two must be added a third, compassion. Compassion for Danny O'Neill and Studs Lonigan was easily generated. In these stories, however, Mr. Farrell is dealing for the most part with people for whom he has very little of that identifying sympathy. He is opposed to their way of life, violently opposed to their values or lack of values; if, like his earlier heroes, they are victims of a world they never made, they are also victims of themselves and, to a great extent, they have made themselves. Yet, without mitigating a line in the indictment implicit in each of the stories, Mr. Farrell manages to pity rather than scorn, and, what is more, he manages to share his pity with the reader.

The scope, here, is broadened considerably and the early violence has disappeared almost completely. The title story is the first person narrative—a device Mr. Farrell uses often and accurately, if with a total lack of subtlety—of an American girl in Paris. A government employee, she is methodically planning for marriage, and marches blindly toward her dream of love. As indicated, the determinedly flat prose of this girl's mind, and the remarkable way in which she reveals it—at times almost like a Ring Lardner first person—are irritating, but the final emotion is pity.

The best in the book is a short piece, another direct first person narrative, in which an elderly cog in the industrial machine tries to express what big league baseball has meant to him. He recalls the men that used to be; he remembers the death of a work-companion, not seen for years; he feels vaguely apologetic toward his wife; he goes out to a ball game featuring a presentation of some of the old-timers. He thinks about his life. That's the story and it is told with an economy too rare in the book.

Mr. Farrell's faults are easy to catalogue and they are still present, although perhaps to a lesser degree. If not simply, he writes directly of what he sees. His limited vision is honestly passed along and, however limited, it is vision. He sees not deeply but he sees clearly and what he sees is a part of the American experience. While he is not to everyone's taste, it would be a shame to miss him because of fastidious feelings for syntax. The present volume is one of his best.

Soul of Russia

VISIONS RISE AND CHANGE. By Pierre van Paassen. The Dial Press. $3.95.

By HELENE ISWOLSKY

IN this book, Pierre van Paassen describes his journeys to the U.S.S.R. "in search of religion in Russia." Mr. van Paassen's interest in Russia was stirred many years ago, when, as a Protestant

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missionary, he worked among members of a Russian community in the Canadian Northwest. But when treading Russian soil, first in 1930, and on several occasions later, he realized that Christianity was alive in Russia, in spite of several decades of anti-religious action, from straight persecution to the so-called methods of propaganda. Turning the pages of the author's interesting and colorful record, we see that the "voyager" spared no effort, was discouraged by no vexation, big or small, in his attempts to discover Russia's deeply hidden religious life.

Disregarding the supervision of the "Intourist" and the ceaseless spying of an "interpreter," guide and mentor, van Paassen has visited churches, monasteries and prayer meetings, spoken to priests, monks and preachers, and was once received in private audience by Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow, later elevated to the patriarchal throne.

Pierre van Paassen had also an interview with Emelian Yaroslavsky, the leader of the "godless movement," who was then all powerful, or at least imagined himself to be so. A few years later, Yaroslavsky admitted that his anti-religious campaigns, marked by the persecution of the clergy, desecration of churches, and the scientific elimination of "popular superstitions," had ended in complete failure. Godless activities have been considerably slowed down since Yaroslavsky's death, although, it is true, Sergius' successor, Patriarch Alexis, has been curbed by the Soviet government, and one can scarcely speak of "freedom of religion" in Soviet Russia.

As Mr. van Paassen points out in the last chapter of his book, the Church in Russia today is not so much threatened by persecution as by a growing subservience to the State. It may actually become the State's "protege . . . . . for the sake of social peace. . . ." However, van Paassen's journeys through Russia are not concerned with ecclesiastical officialdom; they are concerned with the faith of the Russian people.

The Russians learned long ago to be Christians in their own right, in spite of political and social con-

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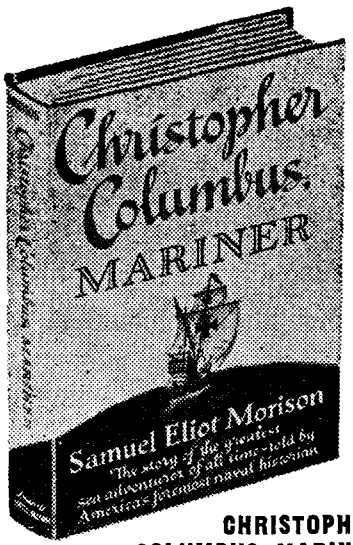

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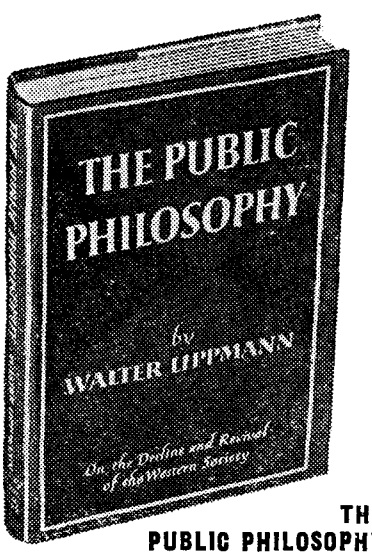

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ditions. The monks of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves, founded in the XIth century are still there. The peasant and city congregations, filling the churches, are still there. The ancient Liturgy is still there, with the Eucharist as its central theme. The pilgrims, who went from one sanctuary to the other in Russia, are still there. Van Paassen met one of them, a woman who had covered a thousand miles on foot "with a staff in her hand."

These are doubtless the most revealing pages of *Visions Rise and Change*, and the author, drawing his final conclusions, says that Russia "still lives under the paradoxical folly of the Cross." In Odessa, which, according to Mr. van Paassen, is a "sea" of religious life, there is a monk who declares that he has seen Christ. In fact, it was Christ Who saved him from a mass execution and, taking him by the hand, lifted him out of the pit. Pressed to describe his vision, the monk simply stated that Christ "looked just like anybody else."

This statement is typical of Russia's religious experience today. Christ is no longer a legendary figure; He is almost unseen, unnoticed. He is nowhere and everywhere, He is the Godman, He is Everyman, and Everyman's Savior.

British Abroad

ISLAND IN THE SUN. Alec Waugh. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. $3.95.

By NICK THIMMESCH

THE most appropriate thing to say, upon finishing Alec Waugh's *Island in the Sun*, is probably something like this: "He told a good story, and he told it well." For craftsmanship is the hallmark of this long and easygoing new novel.

Mr. Waugh was wise in letting this frank look into the lives of the people inhabiting a Caribbean island last as long as it did. For that long and leisurely gaze (which actually spans only seven months in the book) is necessary in a place like Santa Marta, the fictional Bri-

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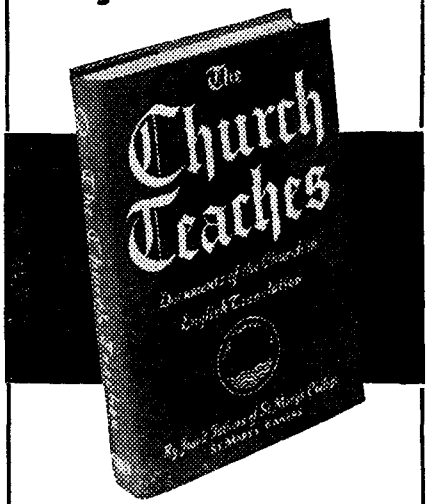

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tish Crown Colony which encloses the action of this novel. On Santa Marta, the routine of every-day life is slow, but the expressions of those things which have meaning to its people are passionate and sometimes violent.

The people of Santa Marta are the colored working class and their white rulers. But as it turns out, some of the English families also have "color" in their family trees, and this fact serves as a subterranean and very powerful director of much of the action. The reader who is acutely aware of the sociological connotation of the word "color" could well see this as a novel which explores the problems of race. For almost all of the major characters in this book, at one time or other, come to grips with the color "question" or are intimately influenced by it. But Mr. Waugh, in this novel, is too good a storyteller to allow one theme to dominate. Indeed, Mr. Waugh, like a veteran boxer, is using all his skill, technique and experience to win this one.

To help win—to help tell a good story—Mr. Waugh has created a number of characters, and they all seem to represent types. We have Maxwell Fleury, son of the rich planter, and a stormy fellow is Maxwell. We soon learn he is inclined toward pride and jealousy and with them, perhaps, violence. Then we have the Negro demagogue, David Boyeur, the messiah of the plantation workers, who, like many messiahs, has selfish motives and can be counted on to be the constant troublemaker. The disillusioned, bitter exile is also present in the person of Colonel Carson. Like most pathetic figures in tales of the semi-tropics, Carson is to die in a rather unfortunate manner—at the hands of a murderer. Other British types are also here: The young men beginning their colonial careers, the bored and fetching daughters of government officials, and the wise but passive Anglican archdeacon. The most interesting character of the book is Colonel Whittingham, the chief of police, who knows who the murderer is, but does not have the evidence—yet. Another figure who elicits a certain fascination is

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Bradshaw, the American journalist who serves to move the action, to string the events together with his dispatches to a Baltimore paper. The most significant character, however, is the priest-like Grainger, a British-educated Negro, who is attorney-general of Santa Marta and who obviously represents the ideal and the hope of both the author and the island.

The story itself involves fictional ingredients which are sure-fire stuff. There are several affairs and romances; a violent murder; a great fire in the cane fields; the threat of a worker uprising; the pain and distress of young people learning of their parents' past and genealogy; a second violent murder which is actually a suicide (only the victim, the author and the reader know this); and finally a governmental crisis and what follows it—the arrival of a British Man-of-War, recall of the island's governor and the resignation of a cabinet minister in England.

There is merit in Mr. Waugh's restraint in this work. Perhaps it is this restraint, however, which explains the absence of rewarding characterization. But in spite of this weakness, *Island in the Sun* is a good story, well told.

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The Road To Peace And Moral Democracy: An Encyclopedia of Peace. By Boris Gourevitch. International Universities Press. 227 W. 13th St., N.Y. 11, N.Y. Vols. I and II. $20.

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William J. Smith is a free-lance writer now working as an editor in New York.

Frank Getlein is a frequent contributor to The Commonweal, *Today*, and several other magazines.

Helen Iswolsky is a frequent contributor to The Commonweal, a lecturer at Fordham University Russian Institute, and a member of the editorial board of the *Third Hour*.

Nick Thimmesch, a New York journalist, with this review makes his first *appearance in The Commonweal*.

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WAGNER Siegfried Idyll **SMETANA** The Moldau

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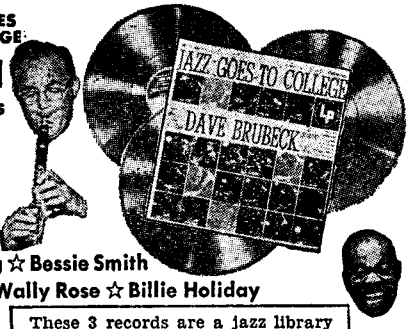

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